

Perrysburg Pre-K Students Focus on Weather Forecasting!

Pre-K students at the Perrysburg center began their thought provoking weather project this past fall and extended the lesson plan through the spring. The project began when students in the class took an interest in rainbows. They enjoyed using all the crayons and markers when drawing and would use phrases such as “look I’m using all the colors in the rainbow!” Ms. Felicia then began asking many open ended questions during morning meeting investigating what the children knew about weather, and what more they wanted to know. Doing this she discovered a lot of weather phenomena that the children believed they knew the answer to such as where the wind comes from, how a rainbow is made and how the weather guy knows what the weather will be like.

Launching the weather project began with their interest in rainbows. In discussing rainbows students learned that rainbows are made with rain and sun. They learned why they see the colors of the rainbow, why it takes its arch shape, where the sun is in the sky when they see a rainbow and how to make a rainbow. Rainbows then led to rain.

Students explored evaporation, talked about the shape of rain drops (which are not tear drop shaped), where the smell of rain comes from and why rain is needed. Talking about the effects of rain brought up mud!

Mud pies were created in class, and students explored different consistencies of mud each day. They had lots of fun using letter stamps and stamping descriptive words using mud! While painting with mud, the students asked what could make mud dry and this brought up the sun. They talked about how the sun affects the weather, the sun as a star, and how the seasons come about.

Wind was covered using a global wind pattern constructed in class to help better understand how winds blow from the poles to the equator, how cold wind is heavy and brings low pressure and how hot wind is light and brings high pressure. They practiced reading a graph by determining the wind chill factor by the temperature outside and the wind speed. Wind paintings were crafted with a large fan and the teachers explained that although they don’t see the wind, they can see its affect.

This led to tornadoes. Tornado safety was covered and the children constructed tornado safety plans with their families at home. They talked about tornado season, tornado valley and geometric shapes when describing a tornado as a cone or funnel.

Cloud charts were used to show high, medium and low clouds and how each cloud affects the weather. They also talked about the characteristics that make a cloud, and how the temperature of clouds affect whether it rains or showers. Estimations on how many clouds (cotton balls) were in a jar were made and they created their very own “It Looked Like Spilt Milk.”

The winter months brought up the discussion of snow. Pictures of snow flakes were reviewed and they learned how snowflakes are formed and discussed the four kinds of

snowflakes. Snow accumulation was measured during each snow fall. The children learned to ice skate indoors by placing paper plates under their feet and also made snowmen using salt dough.

The project was concluded by talking about meteorologists and weather predictions. Weather maps were posted and updated daily using weather.com. They also began graphing the weather and learned meteorologists use weather graphs to aid in weather prediction. They talked about Radars and how a Doppler Radar works and looked at Doppler images and drew oil pastel pictures of Doppler images. Looking at the pictures, the children noticed when there is a storm, the clouds form a swirling motion. The housekeeping area was turned into a weather station. There were fancy clothes to wear to look like the meteorologists seen on television, and a light projector put images of weather maps on the wall too!

It was very nice having Doug Moats from Fox News come to the classroom. Even Doug was surprised with how much the children knew! Click here to view the video and coverage by Fox News.

http://www.foxtoledo.com/dpp/weather/wupw_stormTracker_Weather_tour_Childrens_Discovery_Center_031609